



Larchmont
Temple

הדר הרים

CHOOSING JUDAISM REQUIREMENTS TOWARDS CONVERSION

Choosing Judaism is a process which each candidate experiences differently. Your decision to undertake this journey is a personal one, but one you should not and really cannot accomplish alone. The path to Judaism is a combination of structure and creativity, of community building and individual growth, of study and experience. These are essential pieces of what will develop into your Jewish outlook. What follows are my guidelines and requirements towards conversion.

Jewish tradition teaches that it is upon three pillars that the world stands: **Torah-Study**, **Avodah-worship** and **Gimilut Chasadim- acts of loving kindness**. These will also be the basic pillars of your journey towards conversion.

TORAH- STUDY

- Completion of **Introduction to Judaism**: a 16 week course which explores basic Jewish ideas and practices. (If you have a Jewish spouse, or significant other, they should also attend the class with you.) *For more information contact The UAHC- Dept. of Outreach (212)-249-0100.*
- Fulfillment of a **second introduction course**. Any JCC or adult education congregational course of at least 15 hours classroom time can be substituted for this requirement. (A basic Hebrew class is a good way to fulfill this requirement and acquire prayer book skills as well.)
- **Outside Reading**: I will suggest titles to be read before during and after your Introduction to Judaism class that we will discuss in our regular individual sessions.
- Regular **individual meetings** that we will schedule. These meetings will include the opportunity to discuss unanswered questions from class, to study traditional sources that frame the process of becoming Jewish and a chance to explore the deeper spiritual and emotional aspects of your journey.
- The completion of a **Brit Gerut**- personal pledge of commitment to Judaism. This final project/statement will allow you to explore an aspect (or aspects) of Judaism that is particularly interesting to you. It should also help you articulate what it is you will do to affirm your Judaism in terms of **Torah- study**, **Avodah-worship**, and **Gimilut Chasadim-acts of loving kindness**.
- During your conversion process you are invited to attend any and all adult education course, lectures and programs at Larchmont Temple free of charge.

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Rabbi Emeritus

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Cantor Emeritus

AVODAH-WORSHIP

- Regular attendance (at least once a month) at **Friday night or Saturday morning Shabbat worship**. This can be at any synagogue, though I recommend that you spend some time at our synagogue so that I am better able to answer specific questions as to what goes on and why in a particular service.
- **Completion of one Jewish calendar year**. This includes attendance at all major holiday observances: all High Holiday services, both evening and morning the Fall of your year of conversion instruction, either evening or morning services for **Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Shavuot, Passover**, as well as a *seder* and **Purim** services.
- **Home Ritual**: Begin to celebrate Shabbat in some way. Light candles and say the blessings over them. Say *Kiddush* over kosher wine and *Motzei* over Challah. Celebrate Hanukah by lighting the menorah.
- Keep a journal of these attendances and rituals. Record your observations, feelings and new understandings that come as a result of these new Jewish experiences.

GIMILUT CHASADIM-ACTS OF LOVING KINDNESS

- Through study (both individually and in our meetings,) you will acquire an understanding of Jewish concepts of righteous living and the difference between *Tzedakah* and charity in Judaism.
- Participation in one or more *social action* projects organized by the social action committee of the synagogue.
- In a loving and respectful way, you must let your non-Jewish family know of your intention to choose Judaism.

THE CONVERSION CEREMONY

- *Mikvah*- ritual immersion for both women and men.
- *Hatafat Dam Brit*- private ceremonial circumcision for men only.
- An ability to answer "yes" to the following questions:
 1. Do you choose to enter the eternal covenant between God and the people of Israel and to become a Jew of your own free will?
 2. Do you accept Judaism to the exclusion of all other religious faiths and practices?
 3. Do you pledge loyalty to Judaism and to the Jewish people under all circumstances?
 4. Do you commit yourself to the pursuit of Torah and Jewish knowledge?
 5. If you should be blessed with children, do you promise to raise them as Jews?